

For Immediate Release

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Legislation will extend benefits for thousands in NJ-13

Washington, D.C. - With New Jersey's unemployment rate hovering at 9.3 percent, Congressman Sires called for swift passage of legislation to extend unemployment benefits for more than 25,000 unemployed residents in Hudson, Essex, Middlesex, and Union counties. The Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009, if passed, will continue unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks for workers in states where the overall unemployment rate averages 9% or more over a three month period.

"Without this critical legislation, hundreds of thousands of Americans will begin to exhaust their unemployment benefits," said Sires. "We are working hard to rebuild the economy and more jobs are being created, but there is no overnight fix. In the interim, this legislation will help bridge the gap for unemployed workers as they seek new employment."

In the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress extended the termination date of employment benefits through the end of the year along with other provisions to help stimulate the economy, create jobs, and help the unemployed. However, the National Employment Law Project estimates over half a million people will exhaust their unemployment benefits by the end of September and nearly 1.5 million will run out by the end of the year.

"With roughly one job opening for every five job seekers, we must act to quickly extend benefits to those hardworking Americans who need it most. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, which will help many New Jersey families struggling to make ends meet."

Congress is expected to consider an extension of unemployment benefits beginning in September.

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